



THIS WEEK IN IRAQ



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Top Stories



**Iraqi Soldiers
dole out flags,
Page 3**

**Troops
taking
over in
Mosul,
Page 5**



**Marines build
medical
center,
Page 10**



**Mobilizing
marksmen,
Page 12**



The Baghdad Dive and Rescue Team members huddle up while testing equipment recently purchased with the help of Coalition funding. The divers conduct search and rescue, salvage and anti-insurgency operations along the Tigris River in Baghdad.

Iraqi Police dive in with new gear

Story and photo by
Petty Officer 2nd Class John J. Pistone
MNSTC-I Public Affairs

Men in scuba gear may not be the first image that comes to mind when picturing Iraqi Police officers. However, in Baghdad, an elite unit of Iraqi policemen strap on a pair of fins as well as a weapon when they go to work.

The Baghdad Dive and Rescue Team, a unit within the Baghdad River Patrol, has been performing rescue operations for more than 10 years, but they've been doing so without proper equipment.

Thanks to financial help from their Coalition partners, that has changed.

The Coalition helped the dive team purchase more than \$21,000 worth of equipment that, according to U.S. Navy Lt.

Cmdr. James Hanley, a military advisor with Coalition Police Assistance Training Team Plans and Operations, they "desperately needed" to accomplish their missions.

"When we arrived we could not fathom how they were getting anything done. They had rusted out tanks and their wet suits were shredded, yet they were still going out and successfully completing their missions," said Hanley.

Now the dive team's equipment includes new tanks, an air compressor, buoyancy compensators, masks, fins, wet suits and lights. The equipment was presented to the team during the first week of February. The team recently took the equipment for a "test dive" in a Baghdad-area swimming

See **SCUBA**, Page 5

GENERAL CASEY'S CORNER

Adding up the miles

The year 2006 is already shaping up to be a decisive year for Iraq. In 2005, Iraqis formed the basis for a free country through multiple elections, the writing and ratifying of a constitution and denying safe havens to terrorists. In 2006, the Iraqi people will reap the benefits of that hard work by taking back more and more control of their country, while seating a democratic government.

At this moment 43 Iraqi Army battalions, 10 brigade headquarters and two division headquarters control their own battlespace. To put that in perspective, Iraqi Security Forces are now responsible for security in roughly 460 square miles of Baghdad and more than 11,600 square miles in other provinces of Iraq. That is an increase of more than 4,000 square miles since October. To go with that new territory, over the last three months the number of ISF independent operations exceeded the number of Coalition force independent operations. ISF independent operations have increased by 24 percent since May.

What has made this dramatic increase in ISF forces possible? Tough, realistic training and thousands of brave Iraqi men and women volunteering to be part of the police and military forces has made current force levels possible. In turn, this

By Gen. George W. Casey
Multi-National Force - Iraq
Commanding General



allows Multi-National Force - Iraq to field high quality units at a rapid pace. However, this is not a factory. Organizing, equipping, and training each battalion, and then determining if and when it is capable of controlling its own battlespace differs from unit to unit.

The Coalition is on pace for about 75 percent of the Iraqi Army brigades to take the security lead by late fall. As the number of trained and effective ISF increases, often the question about a timetable for Coalition withdrawal arises. While the transition of Iraqi battlespace is a key indicator of Iraqi Security Force success, it is only one of several conditions determining Coalition Forces presence and at what levels. Factors such as the threat level, the ISF's continued capability to secure their areas of responsibility and key ministerial capacity for agencies such as Interior, Defense and Finance are just some of the factors that influence any future reductions.

How much the new Iraqi government is seen as a "unity" government will have a great effect on how quickly Iraq can move forward in this decisive year of 2006.

Through it all, the ISF will be taking the front line in battling the insurgency while ensuring a stable, secure, normal daily life for many peace-loving Iraqis who want to realize their great country's potential.

Photos around the Fertile Crescent



Maj. Polly R. Graham, a registered dietitian, offered advice and information on weight loss and nutrition to the Soldiers with the 3rd Corps Support Command.



Capt. Erik Aadland (front and center) looks up from his reading during his flight over Iraq. Most of the passengers in this aircraft are returning to Iraq after a 2-week R & R break.



Pfc. Janelle Zalkovsky of the Civil Affairs Unit, 1st Bn., 320th FA Reg., 101st Airborne provides security while other Soldiers survey a newly constructed road in Ibriam Jaffes. It connects the village to other main travel routes.



John Christofferson with the Navy EOD Detachment 11, a member of the EOD Mobile Unit 11 out of Woodby Island, Wash., shoots the 50 caliber sniper rifle at a range in Ad Diwaniyah

MNF-I Commanding General
Gen. George W. Casey Jr.

**Combined Press
Information Center Director**
Lt. Col. Barry A. Johnson
barry.johnson@iraq.centcom.mil

Command Information Chief
Capt. Bradford E. Leighton
bradford.leighton@iraq.centcom.mil



Editor.....Spc. David J. Claffey
david.claffey@iraq.centcom.mil
Assistant Editor.....Spc. Richard L. Rzepka
richard.rzepka@iraq.centcom.mil
Command Information NCOIC.....Sgt. Jeffrey M. Lowry
jeff.lowry@iraq.centcom.mil

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Iraq's 1st Army Division knocks out second mission

Story by Capt. Jeffrey S. Pool
Multi-National Forces - West

CAMP FALLUJAH — Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 4th Brigade, 1st Iraqi Army Division spearheaded their second independent operation on Feb. 12.

Iraqi Soldiers led a sweeping operation in the village of Subiyaht to clear the area of insurgents and interact with the populace.

Subiyhat is a small village in rural, eastern Al Anbar Province, home to more than 2,000 citizens.

Operation Tawakalna Ala Allah (Trust in God) was the unit's second battalion-sized operation in the Al Anbar Province planned and conducted by the 1st Battalion, 4th Brigade leadership. It resulted in the detention of four suspected insurgents and enhanced relations between the citizens of Subiyhat and the Iraqi Army.

"I want the people in this area to understand that we are here for their protection and we are here to stay," said Col. Najim Abdullah Menahi Salmon, commanding officer, 1st Battalion, 4th Brigade. "I am very proud of the way my soldiers operated today...our mission was a success."

The operation involved three Iraqi Army

companies from the battalion, which patrolled the village. Two Marine companies from 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team - 8, manned the outer security cordon.

Iraqi Soldiers met with locals and searched for illegal weapons. They also distributed leaflets with the battalion's tips line phone number so residents can report insurgent activity. In addition, the Soldiers passed out several dozen Iraqi national flags while interacting with the villagers.

"The national flags are popular because it gives the people pride to receive the Iraqi flag from the soldiers of the Iraqi Army," Najim said. "I plan to build on our success today and increase these types of operations in the future."

The Marine commander supporting the



U.S. Marine Corps photo by 1st Lt. Nate Braden
An Iraqi soldier from the 1st Iraqi Army Division jokes with residents of Subiyaht, Iraq during Operation Tawakalna Ala Allah.

operation also considered the day's efforts a success.

"My number one priority during this deployment is to facilitate the development of the Iraqi Army capabilities," said Lt. Col. David J. Furness, commanding officer, 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment. "The more [the Iraqi Army] operates, the more confident they become in their abilities and the more eager they become to assume responsibility for security."

Iraq's 1st Battalion, 4th Brigade assumed their current battlespace from the U.S. Marine's 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment on Feb. 1.

This operation was the next step in the progression of this unit gaining complete operational independence in this area of operations, Furness said.

Boxes from home yield toys for the children

Story by 1st Lt. Ben Tiernan
172nd Stryker Brigade
and Sgt. 1st Class Steve Petibone
138th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

MOSUL — Soldiers from Company A, 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team patrolling sparsely populated Mosul neighborhoods came upon a mission they were not trained for - Iraqi children.

"When my unit first arrived and began patrolling towns north of Mosul, it became clear to us the children had very little of anything, both at home and at school," said 1st Lt. Ben Tiernan, fire support officer, Troop A, 172nd SBCT.

This "new" mission needed rear-area support. "My sister began teaching in Iowa last year. After a few phone calls home, her class began a project, a project that consisted of the students collecting toys they wished to give to Iraqi children," said Tiernan.

Eventually, Tiernan was able to take

leave and visited his sister's class. The American school children had been busy collecting a couple large boxes of toys and school supplies, awaiting Tiernan's visit.

The best was yet to come. After Tiernan returned to Mosul, he received 13 more boxes filled with almost every conceivable thing that a child in the United States would want. "I began to receive boxes of Beanie Babies, Hot Wheels, Crayons, Legos, Buzz Light Year [action figures], Barbie and Ken dolls, toy phones, paper, pens, markers, chalk and a seemingly unending supply of the things that kids like," said Tiernan.

Now, Troop A was ready for a mission, to return to those same Mosul neighborhoods and distribute the bounty of gifts from the American schoolchildren.

"We took the 13 boxes I received in the mail and added them to the boxes I brought back from my leave," said Tiernan, "We loaded them onto our Strykers and drove

out of Mosul into the sparsely populated areas to the north."

Troop A delivered their goods to a small kindergarten class in the village of Tall Kayf where there were about 140 children about to be surprised. The unit used precision in targeting what toy they thought each child wanted.

"It was a fun day. Days when experiences like these are possible are few and far between. It is these days that Soldiers remember why we are here in Iraq and away from home," said Tiernan.

Before calling it mission complete, Tiernan and company took the last and largest box to a local health clinic so the rest of the toys could be distributed to sick children.

"To this group of third-graders in Iowa, Iraqi children are just children that needed help, no different from themselves and they were willing to contribute to the cause," said Tiernan.



Soldiers load concrete barriers for checkpoint construction in north Salah Ad Din Province as Iraqi 7th SIB Soldiers and 1/33rd Cav. Soldiers provide security.

Iraq's intersecting interests

Story and photos by Capt. Amy A. Bishop
133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Since the fall of the Saddam Hussein regime, the primary missions in Iraq have been to establish security for the country, kill insurgents, establish a democratic government and make Iraq a safer place for its citizens.

The rebuilding of key infrastructure such as electrical plants, power lines, water facilities, chemical plants, roads, dams and oil pipelines had taken a backseat to the more pressing issue of establishing law and order and stamping out insurgents.

Now, with more and more Iraqi Army units coming online, getting the country's infrastructure systems up and running has become a primary goal.

There are, however, security concerns about the new infrastructure. While the Iraqi Army is focused on overall security of an area, strategic infrastructure battalions secure infrastructure.

Strategic infrastructure battalions are not new. They originally fell under the supervision of the Ministry of Interior. Recently, many of these specialized battalions have realigned under the Iraqi Army, allowing for proper training and the acquisition of new equipment and personnel.

The 7th SIB, working in the northern area of the Salah Ad Din Province, has two missions. It provides security for power lines and an oil pipeline.

The 7th SIB is working side-by-side

with Soldiers from the 3rd Brigade Combat Team's, 1st Squadron, 33rd Cavalry Regiment to secure a pivotal highway intersection.

"By controlling this intersection we are doing two things," said Maj. David E. Norton, squadron executive officer of 1/33rd Cav. "We are controlling the traffic that flows north and south." They are also doing spot checks for weapons, for munitions and for terrorists that might be coming in from out of the country.

Completion of the pipeline will greatly improve the economic situation of the people here, once oil begins to flow again.

Iraqi SIB soldiers will also be trained in proper checkpoint procedures and in maintaining 24-hour checkpoint operations.

Soldiers from the 1/33rd Cav will partner with SIB soldiers to oversee operations at the checkpoint and to provide services such as bomb detection dogs until construction and training are complete.

Norton believes that the training and assistance they are providing the 7th SIB brings Iraq closer to independence and Soldiers closer to home.

"It is a pretty important job because we know if we keep the oil flowing and the power flowing, keys to the economy and keys to making Iraq safe and secure,...[Iraq] can stand on its own feet," said Norton.

Police force 80 percent full

By Steven Donald Smith
American Forces Press Service

BAGHDAD — Iraqi Police forces have been well trained and are making a positive contribution to the country, U.S. military officials said.

"It's a humbling experience to see what the national police are doing on behalf of the good people of Iraq, and it's a rewarding experience to contribute to their success and to be part of their continued growth and improvement," U.S. Army Col. Gordon "Skip" Davis said. He is head of the American-led public order special police transition teams and spoke in a briefing from Baghdad Friday.

The teams have been working with the Iraqi Public Order Special Police for nearly 11 months. They coach, train, teach, mentor and advise the Iraqi police, Davis said.

The national public order police are "high-end national police," and differ from other police units primarily in their mission. They focus on counterterrorism, counterinsurgency threats and anything that goes beyond what local Iraqi stations or patrol police can deal with, Davis said.

"The public order division typically accomplishes its mission by conducting raids, cordon-and-search operations, providing area and fixed-site security and reinforcing local police," he said. "Each of the public order's four brigades has three battalions, a combat support company and a headquarters and support company."

The total of 9,000 public order police

See *Police*, Page 9



Lt. Col. Radif Lafi Al Shemari, commander of the 7th SIB (left) and Maj. David E. Norton, executive officer for the 1/33rd Cav (right) discuss the checkpoint construction.

River warriors taking control in Mosul

Story and photos by Sgt. Dennis Gravelle
138th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

MOSUL — On the east side of the Tigris River, Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 4th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi Army Division perform routine patrols from Combat Out Post Resolve.

The operations center, a bombed-out building being used by 4th Bde, was converted to a barracks and headquarters. It now houses most of the Soldiers from 4th Bde.

Serving alongside these Iraqi Soldiers is a U.S. Military Transition Team that lives with the 4th Bde to mentor and train the officers of the Iraqi Army. MiTT advises, teaches, trains and mentors the Iraqi Army, moving them toward assuming Iraqi battlespace from Coalition Forces.

"It has been a very rewarding experience to live with the Iraqi Army. It's a great

pleasure to work with them, to learn their culture," said Capt. Jesse Bell, operations officer, 2nd Bn, 4th Bde, 2nd Iraqi Div. MiTT. "They have courage and want a free Iraq."

"These IA Soldiers make me feel proud to be with them, it shows a lot of heart and courage to go out without some equipment," said Capt. Michael

Prengent, intelligence advisor for 3rd Bn, 4th Bde, 2nd Iraqi Div. "It makes you stand taller in our turret when we are out with them; they are very professional and courageous"

"We don't make a lot of money, but I did not join for money," said one Iraqi Soldier. "I joined to preserve my country, and to make Iraq a safe place for all the people and safe from terrorists."

One obstacle facing the Iraqi Army is an equitable working relationship with the Iraqi Police. This has been a constant struggle for the MiTT's, but the relationship is improving by getting both organizations to sit down and talk to each other. The 4th Bde is mission-oriented to get rid of the insurgency in their area of operation, and that means working hand-in-hand with the Iraqi Police.

"We believe we can work with the police to secure a better future for all Iraq. We have already made sacrifices and have faith that our relationship will improve



An Iraqi Soldier with the 2nd Iraqi Army Division pats down a driver at a checkpoint in Mosul.



A Soldier with the 2nd Iraqi Army Division checks a vehicle during an impromptu checkpoint.

daily," said Lt. Col. Haji Abdulla, chief of staff, 3rd Bn, 4th Bde, 2nd Iraqi Div.

Abdulla is a former member of the Peshmerga Army for the Kurdish. He served with the Peshmerga from 1987-2004. He joined the Iraqi Army in 2004. His Soldiers show him a lot of respect and admiration.

"I am here to preserve my people and my country and with the help of Coalition Forces we are ready to assume control of our area of operation," Abdulla said.

The Iraqi Army has received different types of training from the Coalition Forces to get them ready to assume control of their area of operation. Iraqi Soldiers have learned how to search cars and houses. They also learned about flash traffic control points where they stop traffic and look for insurgents.

"We have gained a lot of knowledge from the Coalition Forces that has been very positive for our Soldiers, the training has been very good," said Abdulla.

Scuba

from page 1

pool.

Hanley was amazed at their commitment, even with inadequate gear.

"I don't know of any dive team that would have attempted to do the job with the equipment the Iraqi divers had been

using. Most Coalition divers would have walked off the job years ago," Hanley said.

During one mission, the team had to return to the police station to get their tanks refilled, said Iraqi Police Gen. Alaa. "It took us over an hour just to get our tanks refilled." One key area for the team is the Tigris River, which runs

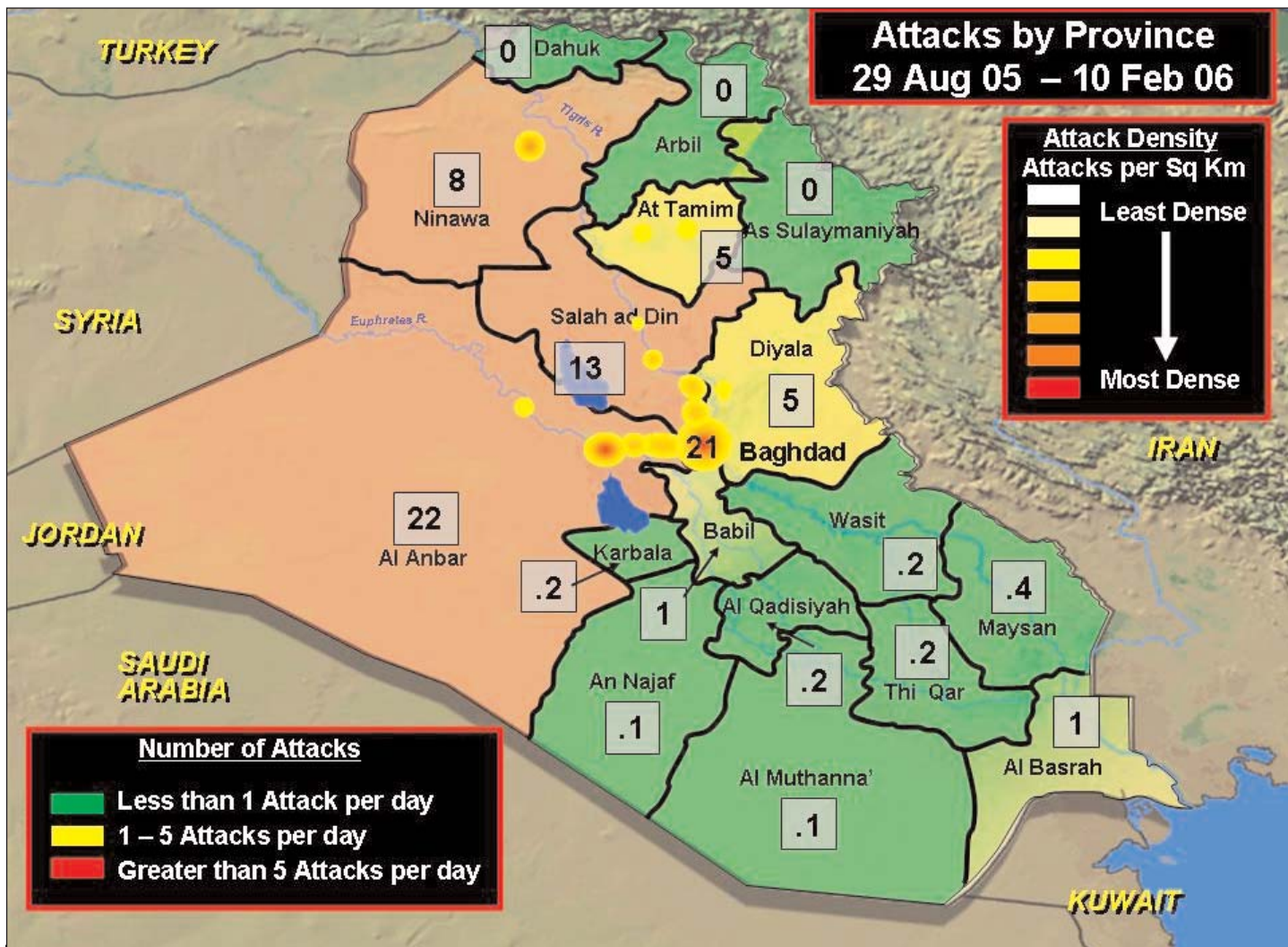
through the heart of Baghdad and splits off throughout the city in various waterways.

"One of our biggest challenges has been night time rescue," said Alaa. "Thanks to the helping hands of the Coalition, this is no longer the case."

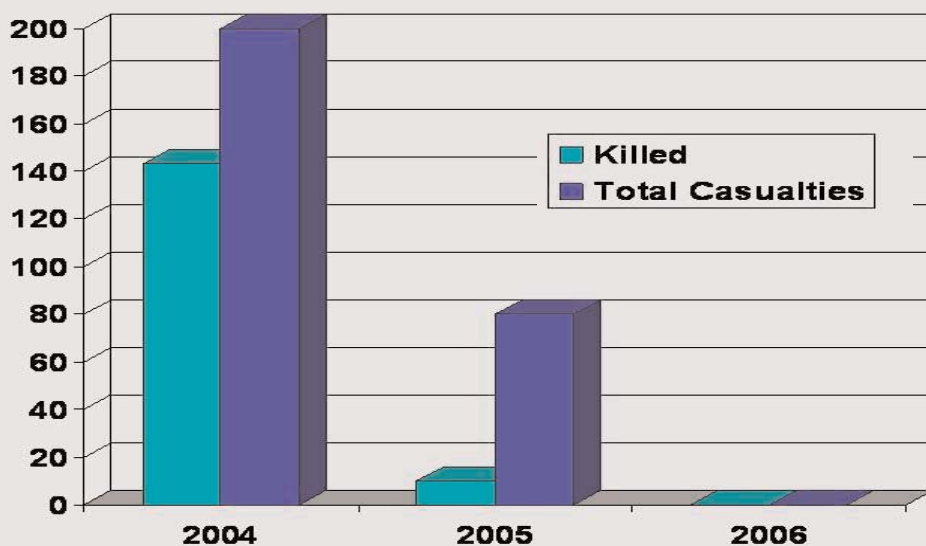
According to Alaa, the waterways around Baghdad are very dangerous. Most of the

rescue calls are in the summer months and involve children.

He said that seeing the dive team with their new equipment sends a message of hope to the Iraqi people. "It deeply affected our dive officers when we were not able to perform a rescue due to equipment problems. These are our people, our children."



ASHURA VIOLENCE COMPARISON



Ashura: 2 March 2004; 19 February 2005; 9 February 2006



"Eighty-five percent of the attacks against the Coalition Forces, the Iraqi Security Forces and the people of Iraq take place in four provinces: Al Anbar, Salahuddin, Nineveh and Baghdad."

"And if you look at the rest of the provinces, 12 of the provinces average less than one attack per day, and 10 of those provinces almost no attacks."

"So the point is, the attacks are indeed taking place, and we continue to average about 70 attacks per day against Coalition Forces, Iraqi Security Forces and Iraqi civilians, but they are isolated attacks -- four provinces where only 40 percent of the population of Iraq live and work."



Building a Firehouse

Photos by Norris Jones

U.S. Army Corps. of Engineers, Central District Public Affairs Office

More than 100,000 residents of Kamaliya in eastern Baghdad will soon have a three-story fire station, complete with five bays for ladder trucks and other rescue vehicles. Construction began in December 2004 and the station should be completed in April. It will include a dormitory for 20 firefighters, a dining room, a control room and training room. About 15 Iraqis have been working on the site, plastering walls, installing tiles and laying pipes for the sanitation and water systems.



Heroes of the Week

Once a Soldier...

Iraqi Warrant Officer says bravery is key to success

Story by Staff Sgt. Monika Comeaux
207th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Faruk Zaed is a transportation warrant officer in the 1st Mobilized Transportation Regiment of the Iraqi Army. He goes on routine missions with his unit almost every day, delivering supplies to other Iraqi Army units.

He has been in the new army for a year. He is a warrant officer because of the prior military experience he has from the time he was in the old army.

The two armies are very different. "When we were in the old army, we could not go home. We spent over 40 days with the unit before we were allowed to go home," said Zaed. "Whatever we need, we can get in the new army," he added. He said the new army needs good Soldiers.

"A good Soldier needs to be brave; otherwise he has no place

in this army. They also need to be honest. We need to leave our fears behind to be in this army," he said. "We are strong and we have taken a stand to defend our country."

He enjoys working with his fellow soldiers. He does not find his new job too dangerous for himself or for his family, yet his neighbors don't know that he is a Soldier. He tells them he works "somewhere far away" and that is why he comes home so infrequently. He says the Soldiers pray to God that nothing bad will happen to their families. He also adds that he lives in the southern part of Iraq, where the situation seems more peaceful, better than Baghdad or the northern part of the country.

He is anxious to see his wife and five children every time he goes home. He thinks it would be a good idea if soldiers could take their army weapons home, to defend themselves and their families.

Cache or Credit? Iraq's Army getting both

Story by Sgt. Kristopher Joseph
Multi-National Corps - Iraq

Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldiers killed four terrorists and detained four in a day. Coalition Forces also found an anti-aircraft gun in an empty house south of Baghdad on Feb. 14.

Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, received small-arms fire from anti-Iraqi forces south of Baghdad on Feb. 15. A firefight ensued and one terrorist was killed. Two other suspected terrorists were detained. The patrol confiscated two AK-47s.

In a separate incident, a patrol from 1st Bn., 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd BCT, 101st Abn. Div., received small arms fire from the Yusafiyah power plant south of Baghdad on Feb. 14. As Soldiers waited for permission to enter the power plant, a van approached and opened fire on the patrol. In the ensuing gun battle two terrorists were killed.

In a third incident, Soldiers from 1st Bn., 22nd Inf. Reg., 2nd BCT., 101st Abn. Div., observed two suspected terrorists low crawling toward a broken down vehicle south of Baghdad Feb. 14. The Soldiers began moving toward the two individuals when they spotted at least one terrorist with a weapon. The two terrorists attempted to flee and a firefight ensued, resulting in one terrorist being killed and the other wounded and detained. The wounded terrorist was medically evacuated to a local hospital where he later died of his wounds.

In a fourth incident, west of Baghdad, a patrol from 2nd Bn., 22nd Inf. Reg., 1st BCT., 10th Mountain Div. was struck by a roadside bomb. There were no reports of damage or casual-



U.S. Army photo by Spc Timothy Kingston

Iraqi and U.S. Army Soldiers search for a possible hidden weapons cache on a farm outside of Hawijah.

ties. During the search for the improvised explosive device triggerman, the MND-B Soldiers arrested one suspected terrorist. The patrol confiscated one AK-47, three cell phones, a cell phone initiator device and detonation cord.

Finally, MND-B Soldiers from 1/502 Inf. Reg., 2nd BCT, 101st Abn. Div., reported finding an anti-aircraft gun and a rocket propelled grenade in an empty house south of Baghdad on Feb. 14. The weapon was found in good condition along with about 200 rounds of ammunition.

Third Iraqi Public Order Brigade

troops recovered a roadside bomb northwest of Salman Pak in eastern Baghdad on Feb. 15. Three Iraqi children led a POB patrol to the bomb. The patrol observed three men running from the site. The suspects eluded capture when a roadside bomb was detonated by terrorists. There were no injuries and no equipment was dam-

aged.

In the predawn hours, 8th Iraqi Army Div. and Coalition Force Soldiers uncovered an improvised-explosive device making cell, killed one terrorist and detained five others on Feb. 14.

They were supported by Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 16th Field Artillery, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, who provided the outer cordon.

"This operation was yet another unique opportunity demonstrating that, equipped and properly trained, the Iraqi Security Forces can successfully conduct complex nighttime operations resulting in the capture of suspected terrorists," said Lt. Col. Michael Hilliard, commander, 3/16 FA.

The 2nd Bn., 2nd Bde., 5th Iraqi Army Div., advised by U.S. Army Special Forces Soldiers, conducted assaults on two targets Feb. 12 in Diyala Province, detaining 102 persons of interest, killing two insurgents and discovering a large weapons cache.

The assaults were designed to capture key insurgents and to disrupt multiple insurgent cell operations - especially improvised explosive device pro-

Operations

from previous page

duction.

The target locations were chosen because intelligence indicated individuals wanted for planning and facilitating insurgent activities.

During the raid on the first target, an Iraqi Army assault team encountered four armed insurgents searching a house. The assault team exchanged small-arms fire with the insurgents, but was forced to withdraw outside of the house for

cover.

One of the team's sergeants stayed in the house and in the fight, killing one and wounding two of the insurgents before falling back to regroup with his team and assault the house again. Those insurgents were taken into custody and the two wounded received immediate medical treatment. One wounded insurgent later died while en route to receive additional medical care.

Of the 102 persons detained, 25 were on Iraqi Security Forces' "most wanted" lists.

A weapons cache discovered on the first objective contained a rocket, two artillery rounds, five mortar rounds, three rocket-propelled grenades, an RPG launcher, three AK-47s, and a collection of IED-making materials.

One Iraqi Army Soldier was slightly wounded by enemy small-arms fire during the operation. He was treated on the scene by Iraqi and U.S. medical personnel.

Iraqi commanders said that the combined operation was a success, and shows the effectiveness of the Iraqi Army. They are looking forward to conducting additional missions to deny insurgent groups safe havens in Diyala Province.

Iraqi battalion leaders used the operation to make needs-based assessments on future training.

Special Operations Forces from the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force - Arabian Peninsula are involved throughout Iraq in training and advising Iraqi Security forces, including army and police units.



U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Katrina Beeler

Iraqi Army Soldiers on Forward Operating Base Duke stack on a door after clearing a room during the rehearsal for an operation.

Police

from page 4

includes 1,100 cadets who just graduated from a six-week training course, Davis said.

"The authorized goal is just under 10,600. So you can see with 9,000, we're over the 80 percent mark, and we believe that certainly by early summer we'll have our full manning," he said.

The public order forces have had long-term deployments in hot spots like Fallujah and Samarra, as well as throughout

Baghdad. They operate both independently and in concert with Coalition Forces and other Iraqi Security Forces, Davis said.

When asked if Shite elements within the Iraqi government and police had carried out vigilante and other ethnic-based attacks against Sunnis, driving more Sunnis onto the side of the insurgency, Davis said that this had not been the case with the public order police because it is a mixed formation.

"We have both Shite and Sunni. As of right now, the public order division is roughly just under 80 percent Shite and 20 percent Sunni, and a very small percentage

of Kurds and Christians and some others," he said. "So within the public order police specifically, we haven't seen that kind of specific sectarian-based type of targeting."

Davis said the make-up of the public order police is roughly equivalent to Iraqi society as a whole.

Davis said bonds have formed among the public order national police, the other Iraqi Security Forces and Coalition Forces.

"We are all serving our respective countries and the good people of Iraq for one common goal - a free and secure Iraq with a government that's representative and accountable to its people," he said.

Marines build Iraq medical center

Story and photos by Cpl. Daniel J. Redding
1st Marine Logistics Group

CAMP TAQADDUM — After months of delays, construction has begun on Camp Taqaddum's new medical facility, with the Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 22 stepping up to the task.

The unit, a part of the 30th Naval Construction Regiment, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, has faced difficulties in getting the project underway and is working hard to see that the medical facility begins taking form.

The biggest difficulty the unit has faced as it has sought to begin construction has been getting its hands on quality materials, said Lt. Jay E. Lowack, officer-in-charge of the project and Company C commander for the Fort Worth, Texas-based unit.

Quality concrete has been hard to come by, said Lowack, 29, a native of Arlington, Texas.

"Getting materials for the concrete has been painful," Lowack said. This inability to get quality gravel and sand, among other things, has been the number one cause of the delays for the unit.

"Our biggest difficulty [in getting the concrete] is our environment," explained Petty Officer 1st Class Pat D. Garrett, a native of Austin, Texas, and the project leader.

The project is expected to take several months now that construction has begun, said Senior Chief Evans J. Atkins, 56, a native of Amarillo, Texas, and the project manager.

With the project initially having been



Petty Officer 2nd Class Christopher Green waits for a cement truck backing up.

started several months prior, all other materials needed for construction of the facility are on hand, Lowack said. The first steps of construction have been taken, with the new cement floor being poured over the course of several weeks.

The sailors of NMCB 22, along with the 4,000 servicemembers of 1st Marine Logistics Group based here, are part of the 25,000 servicemembers of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force's forward deployed element.

The 1st MLG's mission is to provide sustained logistical support to I MEF and Iraqi Security Forces operating in



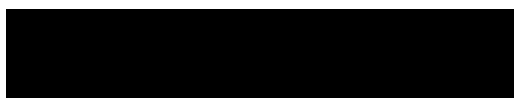
Petty Officer 1st Class Pat D. Garrett, a builder with the Naval Mobile Construction Bn. 22, manages the flow of cement as he and the other sailors of the unit begin pouring Camp Taqaddum's medical facility's cement floor.

the Al Anbar province of Iraq. First MLG will also support the development of ISF logistical capabilities in order to enable independent ISF led counter-insurgency operations.

Question Tag

Q: Why are many Arab flags similar?

The colors have wide-spread significance. Green and Black represent Islam, and red represents Arab nationalism. The stars signify the United Arab Union, which Iraq was set to join with Syria and Egypt in 1963, making it the third country. That bond never happened. Since then Egypt has replaced its two-starred center.



Iraq's Flag (adopted in 1963)
The arabic script Allahu akbar (God is great) was added after the 1991 Gulf War.



Egypt



Jordan



Syria

Rebuilding Iraq

Projects that are shaping a nation

Dahuk

Dahuk residents will have more reliable power with the completion of a new sub-station.

Makmoor

Renovations to the police station in Makmoor are complete, improving the work environment for about 200 police officers serving 78,000 residents of the city.

Kirkuk

New protective walls will enhance security at the Northern Gas Company, allowing the Kirkuk plant to produce its much needed energy for the country.

Sulaimaniyah

A border fort in Sulaimaniyah will increase security along Iraq's border with Iran. The Department of Border Enforcement will also use the structure to train border police and coordinate patrols.

Taji

Two new medical clinics now provide more than 15,000 Iraqi troops with better health care.

Nissan

A water project in Nissan is complete after the installation of about 4.5 miles of pipe and 10 fire hydrants.



Najaf

Electrical feeders will connect three 33-kilovolt substations which distribute power throughout Najaf.





Iraqi Army Soldiers sight in on their targets during a dry-fire drill in Najaf, on Feb. 11. U.S. Army Soldiers with 3rd Bn, 16th FA Reg., are conducting a two-week training course for Iraqi Army Soldiers.

Making A Marksman

Iraqi Soldiers train how to shoot, while being taught when to shoot.

Photos can be found on www.mnf-iraq.com

U.S. Navy photos by
Petty Officer 2nd Class Katrina Beeler



Soldiers disembark a truck to run toward a simulated house during training at Forward Operating Base Duke on Feb. 13 in preparation for an upcoming mission.



U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Robert Bauer, with 3rd Bn., 16th FA Reg., watches as Iraqi Army Sgt. Rydah Jawah tries to aim his weapon while wearing a U.S. Army flack jacket in Najaf on Feb. 11.

Iraqi Army Soldiers stack up to enter a simulated room during training in Najaf on Feb. 11.